

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 2015

RE: S.B. No. 963

S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committees on Human Services and Housing and Commerce
and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 963
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HEARING AIDS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require health
insurance coverage for hearing aids for people with all types of
hearing loss and specify a minimum amount of coverage and
frequency for replacement of hearing aids under coverage.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure
from the Disability and Communications Access Board; Aloha State
Association of the Deaf; American Speech Language Hearing
Association; Hands and Voices Hawaii; National Active and Retired
Federal Employees Association, Hawaii State Federation of
Chapters; Isle Interpret; and sixteen individuals. Your
Committees received comments on this measure from the Department
of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Department of Health, Office of
the Auditor, and Hawaii Medical Service Association.

Your Committees find that the high cost of hearing aids often
deters individuals and families who suffer from hearing loss from
getting hearing aid devices when they are needed. Hearing aid
prices begin around \$2,000 and can cost as much as \$3,000 or
higher per ear or hearing aid. Your Committees further find that
while most health insurance plans in Hawaii cover the purchase of
hearing aids, the plans do not contain important provisions about



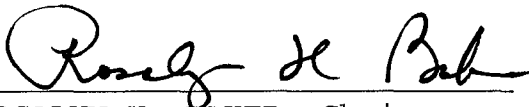
limits on coverage, frequency for replacing hearing aids, or costs covered by insurers.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the required insurance coverage for hearing aids from a maximum benefit of \$1,500 per hearing-impaired ear every thirty-six months to a minimum benefit of \$1,500 per hearing-impaired ear every thirty-six months;
- (2) Removing the provision that exempts qualified health plans offered by health carriers through the Hawaii Health Connector from the coverage mandate so that the coverage requirements apply to all health insurance policies; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Human Services and Housing and Commerce and Consumer Protection that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 963, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 963, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Human Services
and Housing and Commerce and
Consumer Protection,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, Chair



The Senate
Twenty-Eighth Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Human Services and Housing
HSH

Bill / Resolution No.:* <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">SB963</div>	Committee Referral: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">HSH/CPN, NAM</div>	Date: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">2/12/15</div>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313 </div> </div>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne (C)	<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">X</div>			
GREEN, Josh (VC)				<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">Y</div>
HARIMOTO, Breene	<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">X</div>			
RIVIERE, Gil	<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">X</div>			
SLOM, Sam				<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">X</div>
TOTAL	<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">3</div>			<div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">2</div>
Recommendation: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted </div>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">[Signature]</div> </div>				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 0.8em;"> <div>Distribution:</div> <div>Original</div> <div>Yellow</div> <div>Pink</div> <div>Goldenrod</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 0.7em; margin-top: 5px;"> <div>File with Committee Report</div> <div>Clerk's Office</div> <div>Drafting Agency</div> <div>Committee File Copy</div> </div>				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes

The Senate
Twenty-Eighth Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
CPN

Bill / Resolution No.:* <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">SB 963</div>	Committee Referral: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">HSH/CPN, WAM</div>	Date: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">2-12-15</div>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313 </div> </div>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
BAKER, Rosalyn H. (C)	✓			
TANIGUCHI, Brian T. (VC)				✓
KAHELE, Gilbert	✓			
KIDANI, Michelle N.	✓			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn				✓
SLOM, Sam				✓
TOTAL	4			3
Recommendation: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted </div>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive; text-align: center;">Michelle N. Kidani</div>				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 0.8em;"> <div>Distribution:</div> <div>Original</div> <div>Yellow</div> <div>Pink</div> <div>Goldenrod</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;"> <div>File with Committee Report</div> <div>Clerk's Office</div> <div>Drafting Agency</div> <div>Committee File Copy</div> </div>				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes